

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Marcus Palumbo and I am from Mansfield CT. I stand in support of SB 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

Undocumented immigrants contribute to our communities in ways too numerous to count, and yet due to their lack of official papers, are unable to access many government services that documented folks like myself take for granted. This is perhaps most acutely represented by the lack of access to healthcare. Last year the CT legislature took a good first step in opening up HUSKY medicaid to children up to 8 years old, regardless of their immigration status. However, the continued lack of access to healthcare for children older than 8 puts an undue burden on immigrant families, many of whom work jobs that don't pay enough to be able to afford expensive healthcare. SB 284 takes an important next step in ensuring that all children, regardless of immigration status, can get the healthcare they need.

Immigrant families contribute positively to our community. They work and pay taxes, which go toward funding the HUSKY program. It is horribly unfair that they are locked out of accessing the benefits of a program which they help fund and which would benefit their families.

Additionally, it is vital that we work to expand these benefits and open up HUSKY to all who need it, whatever their age. Even if a child has healthcare, they will still be negatively impacted if their parent isn't able to get the care they need. Adults and parents shouldn't be denied healthcare any more than children should be.

I urge you to support and vote yes on SB 284, and to continue expanding access to HUSKY so it covers all immigrants, regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,

Marcus J. Palumbo